

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SR-02 ORM-03 SCA-01 DPW-01 IO-12 HEW-08

AID-20 IGA-02 MED-03 PM-09 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01

SPM-01 RSR-01 /130 W

----- 100162

R 181000 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6776

UNCLAS RANGOON 1161

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: SREF BM

SUBJECT: MEDICINES FOR BURMESE REFUGEES

REF: RANGOON 570

1. AT BURMESE RED CROSS SOCIETY' S REQUEST, AMBASSADOR PARTICIPATED IN BRIEF CEREMONY AT BRC HEADQUARTERS MAY 18 TURNING OVER 230,000 TABLETS CHLOROQUININE FOR RELIEF OF BURMESE REFUGEES WHO HAVE HAD TO FLEE FROM THEIR HOMES BECAUSE OF NATURAL DISASTERS AND OTHER CALAMITIES. AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED HOPE TABLETS WOULD BE SPEEDED ON THEIR WAY TO HELP COUNTER MALARIA WHICH IS PREVALENT AT ONSET OF MONSOON SEASON.

2. BRC PRESIDENT U SAN MAUNG INDICATED TABLETS WOULD BE SHIPPED BY AIR TO REGIONS WHERE NEED WAS GREATEST. HE STATED THAT FOUR REFUGEE CAMPS IN NORTHEAST SECTOR AROUND TOWN OF TANGYAN CLOSE TO LASHIO ( I. E., WEST OF SALWEEN) WERE IN GREAT NEED OF MEDICINES, ADDITIONAL BLANKETS, ETC. HE NOTED THAT MALARIA, MALNUTRITION AND GOITER WERE PREVALENT, AND THAT ONE PARTICULARLY VIRULENT SPECIES OF MALARIA COULD HAVE FATAL EFFECTS.

3. SAN MAUNG STATED THAT BRC LOCAL OFFICIALS WOULD DISTRIBUTE TABLETS IN REFUGEE AREAS CLOSE TO LARGER TOWNS, WITH BURMESE UNCLASSIFIED

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ARMY HANDLING DISTRIBUTION IN AREAS WHERE SECURITY LESS ASSURED.

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUERY, SAN MAUNG SAID HE COULD NOT GIVE EXACT FIGURE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN THAT AREA SINCE HE DID NOT HAVE REPORTS AT HAND, BUT NEVERTHELESS CITED ESTIMATE OF 20,000. HE NOTED THAT SOME REFUGEES CAME INTO CAMPS ON TEMPORARY BASIS, AND RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES AFTER BURMESE ARMY HAD DRIVEN INSURGENTS BACK AT VARIOUS POINTS. HE ALSO DISCLOSED THAT SOME INHABITANTS OF REFUGEE CAMPS HAD GRAVITATED THERE BECAUSE OF RICE SHORTAGES IN THEIR OWN VILLAGES.

5. AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF BRC WOULD OBTAIN PHOTOGRAPHS SHOWING PITIFUL CONDITION AND DIRE NEED OF REFUGEES AND ALSO SHOWING BLANKETS AND MEDICINES SUPPLIED BY ARC BEING PUT TO USE IN THE REFUGEE AREAS. SUCH EVIDENCE WOULD BE HELPFUL IN SHOWING ARC THAT ITS SUPPLIES WERE MEETING URGENT NEED AND MIGHT STIMULATE ADDITIONAL DONATIONS FROM PRIVATE US FIRMS THROUGH THE ARC.

6. AMBASSADOR ALSO SUGGESTED THAT BRC APPRECIATION BE CONVEYED TO ARC FOR BLANKETS AND TABLETS, INDICATING THAT MOST APPROPRIATE CHANNEL MIGHT BE DIRECTLY FROM ONE RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS TO THE OTHER. SAN MAUNG GAVE IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT BRC WOULD PREFER TO DO IT THROUGH THE EMBASSY.  
MARTIN

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

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